

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated January 23, 2006, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration based on the following remarks. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have not amended, added, or canceled any claims. Thus claims 1-9, 11-14, 17-32, 34-37, and 40-46 remain pending.

Formal Drawings

Acceptance of the formal drawings filed with the application on March 15, 2000 has not yet been acknowledged by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement in a subsequent communication.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-9, 11-14, 17-32, 34-37, and 40-46 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,983,350 to Minear et al. (“Minear”) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0010766 to Holden et al. (“Holden”). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

The Minear reference is directed to a procedure for regulating the flow of messages, both encrypted and not encrypted, over an unprotected network through a firewall. A security association, identified by a security parameter index and a destination IP address, is used to authenticate communication between two firewalls by providing needed processing information to the firewalls. The firewall, acting as a buffer, determines if encrypted and not encrypted messages need to be authenticated. The determination is based upon source and destination addresses, as well as desired services. Authentication protocols include a username/password request and a challenge/response process.

The Holden reference discloses a security system that includes a secure network interface unit (SNIU) for establishing an association with other system devices in order to create a secure communications perimeter between a host device and a network. Holden notes that the host device and the network need not be secure if a secure perimeter exists. The host device requesting access to the network is identified and verified.

Claim 1 recites a method for releasing digital content to a rendering application upon authentication of a path, defined by at least one module, between the rendering application

and an ultimate destination. The authentication determines if each defining module of the path is to be trusted to handle the digital content. The method claim further recites that the authentication comprises developing a map of each module in the path, receiving a certificate as issued by a certifying authority, determining from the certificate whether the certificate is acceptable, and checking a revocation list to ensure that the certificate has not been revoked. Independent claim 24 recites a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 1.

There is no teaching or suggestion in Minear and Holden, either considered alone or in combination, of a certifying authority issuing a certificate to a module as part of the path authentication process, as recited in claims 1 and 24. The Examiner refers to Holden for this alleged teaching of the claims. Holden, in paragraph 95, discusses the use of a Certificate Table "to process in-coming and out-going messages" and, in paragraph 182, teaches that a Certificate Revocation List may be used to delete entries. Further, paragraph 196 of Holden identifies the storage of certificates related to message entries in the Certificate Table. However, the Certificate Table and Revocation List in Holden are directed to the processing of messages, not modules as required by claims 1 and 24.

Thus, since the combination of Minear and Holden fail to teach or suggest several of the elements of claims 1 and 24, as discussed above, a prima facie case of obviousness cannot be established because all elements are not present in any combination of Minear and Holden.

Claims 2-9, 11-14, 17-23 depend on claim 1, while claims 25-32, 34-37, and 40-46 depend on claim 24. These dependent claims (i.e. 2-9, 11-14, 17-23, 25-32, 34-37, and 40-46) are patentable for the same reasons as noted above with respect to claims 1 and 24.

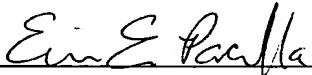
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Conclusion

For all the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims patentably define over the cited art. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-9, 11-14, 17-32, 34-37, and 40-46 is respectfully requested. In the event, however, that the Examiner believes that the application is not allowable for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned agent to discuss resolution of any remaining issues.

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